

M1528
Tuesday, Jan. 28, 1969
Boston
Group II

Mr. Nyland: So, quite a number of new people. Is that because I've been away for some time, or is it an awakened interest. You know, what would be interesting, if you all would come back without me being here. I think it would be very helpful to the Group as a whole, and also it would be helpful to you because you would know why you come or don't come, or why you would not want to come back—or, if you do want to come back, that you don't come back because I happen to be here.

Whenever new people come, there is a great deal of curiosity mixed with it, and when we talk like tonight, it will have to be ... it ought to be possible that curiosity changes over into something that you feel for yourself that you might need; so that curiosity can be satisfied by the realization that there is something that is missing in you, and of course that is what we want to talk about. We know that no one is perfect. We also know that people can learn a great deal. We also know that a person may wish to grow, even when the conditions on Earth will not permit him. And it is that particular accent that we consider when we talk about Gurdjieff: When there is something that you feel that is really necessary in your life and *also*, to some extent which you cannot satisfy with different means with which you may be familiar, or that you have studied, or read about, or thought about.

Because you have to explain your curiosity to yourself, and you really have to ask, "Why do you come now and what, if you do come, what do you expect." For me to find out what you expect, the only way would be to ask what kind of questions you have. And when there are new people, of course you won't have any particular questions, than only you want to know what I will say. And therefore, on those who do know a little bit and who constitute the Group that has been meeting when I was away for a little time, on them rests a responsibility to have questions

now available that we can talk about, for their own benefit as well as for those who are new, so that perhaps in the questions, or in the answers, there may be a little indication for those who come new and perhaps for whom the name Gurdjieff has no particular meaning, or, even if they have been in contact with the ideas or have read a little bit, that perhaps they have missed the quintessence of that kind of teaching.

So, let me straighten that out in the first place, that that what Gurdjieff has to say is an application in your daily life and that since it becomes a philosophical way of looking at life and trying to understand your place, or whatever it is that you happen to call your personality, and whatever there might be in you with ambition, or a desire for growing up, or whichever way you wish to define for yourself what you really would like to become, and to what extent, even, that you could define what a Man should be and what you wish to be. So that then of course you must consider what you are at the present time and, if you're honest, that you try to find out what is lacking, or to what extent that you feel that you could improve and perhaps not know exactly how to go about it. And that the reasons why Gurdjieff has written, or why he has lived, was to try to indicate how necessary it is for anyone who really takes his or her life seriously, to do something about it and to become responsible for the possibility of a further growing.

Sometimes we call it an 'evolutionary' direction in which then, Man, as he is on Earth, could become free from the bondage of Earth. And when we talk about bondage, it simply means that a person is bound by the manifestations of his personality, and that he cannot really change it so easily because he doesn't know how to go about it, and he doesn't know into what to change. And that definitions for that kind of acceptance for oneself first has to be, "What do I really understand of myself and what, in all truthfulness, will I assume that I am, or to what extent even do I have facts that I know this is what I am."

And that, then, it becomes the first problem: What am I. And if I think about that, I can very often say that I am today different from what I was yesterday, and that early in the morning, of course, I'm different. When I'm tired, I'm different. When I talk to one person, I'm one way; when I talk to someone else, I'm different again. When I think about life in general, or when I'm affected by different experiences, then my thoughts are affected. And when I don't like certain things, my feelings of course can become [--inaudible--]. And when I think about that what I ought to do, I may not always agree with myself, that at a certain time I say I 'ought' to, and at another time I say, I 'don't,' and of course that I as a person vacillate constantly between that

what I sometimes consider right for me and that I also believe I'm capable of doing, and that at other times I come to the conclusion that I cannot even do what I think I could have done. And somehow or other, I'm not always master of what I am supposed to be.

So that when we talk about Gurdjieff, we talk about the practical application of a possibility that if Man could in that application actually understand why he wants to so-called 'Work' on himself, that then he has to have in mind that that what he is Working for is valuable for him. And that when he says, "That is why I want to improve or change or better myself," or derive from it a deeper understanding or perhaps a reality of that what I am and the reality of this world, or that I do not understand as yet what is the meaning how I now find myself and the reason why I happen to be born now, even if I'm willing to accept that fact which of course is undeniable—that then with that there is involved the question of, do I want to take the responsibility for my life, or will I just let it go.

The philosophy of Gurdjieff, when one applies it in one's daily life, becomes one's religion. Without, in so many terms, defining what a religion is, than only a mode of living in which one acknowledges the possibility of growth towards that what is higher than what one is now and, in the realization that what one is now, that one knows ... that one knows in what direction one wishes to go. And the acknowledgement of oneself as being incomplete presupposes that if I think I am, that there must be a reason and also a possibility of becoming less and less incomplete.

So the question of Work is a serious one, and it touches you not on the surface of where you usually live but it touches you in a definite place. You can call it your 'essential' qualities, or perhaps your 'inner' life. So, if we want to talk about that, maybe there are questions that have accumulated over this period, and that you have discussed. And I've listened to some of your tapes, and I've heard about it from John, also, what are the different problems that have come up every once in a while. And if there is a certain possibility of clarification, if there is really on your part a desire that you want to know for the sake of being able to use it better, that it can give you much more insight of what your behavior is and if that behavior is really all it's supposed to be or what it even might become, and that you are at the present time in a state in which you think that there are many questions which in your life ought to be solved, then, if that's the case, then we can talk.

So, what questions are there. Yes, Fred.

Fred Goodall: In the last couple of months, my wish to try to Work has been diminishing a lot. It might have something to do with, uh, a lot of ordinary circumstances, or trying to make a living and all that, but still that's the way that it is.

Mr. Nyland: Can you find out for yourself why?

Fred: It's because... I feel that it's because I never really had a strong enough, like, foundation in Work to say it would be so strong in me that, you know, regardless of what life is like that that's still where, you know, I still can have an emphasis on trying to Wake Up.

Mr. Nyland: You know of course there are many different reasons why that can happen. If you compare it with when you became interested, it would be very good to find out what actually at that time interested you. That presupposes that when you are interested, even if it is simple curiosity you, yourself were in a certain state in which that what you heard, or what was new to you, found a place. And, it's quite logical that that what found a place at that time will not find the same place now; because, in the meantime either with the contact of Work and the actuality of trying to apply it, aside from that ordinary life has taken on different forms in which you have lived and we had ... and which you have experienced and in, as one says, that one has 'grown'; or rather, that one becomes more mature and that there are certain values that have appeared to you in life since the time you became acquainted with these ideas, that you then said, "I look at it now a little differently, but that what I look at ... and although it is different, is not desirable for me anymore."

And that may be due to seeing too many things that become undesirable because they are a little bit more truthful—that is one possibility—the other is simply that in ordinary life I experience a variety of different things which of course affect me, and that because of that so much time and energy has to be spent in order to solve them. I may even have lost a little confidence in myself when I have experienced this and tried and tried without any particular success, that that kind of an attitude starts to flow over into that what used to be attractable; or that is ... was something that for you was desirable and that at the present time, simply because the overall picture of yourself has less interest, also it reflects on the interest in Work.

And the third reason is that when I now start to look at that what I at the time believed in, that it has fulfilled its purpose ... and that whatever I then received has been exhausted and then that for that reason, if I still think that I ought to do something about it, or it bothers me that I am not as much interested any longer in Work, I have to find new ways and means in order to

produce it again. And this, then, depends again on the condition in which you find yourself in which you try to think back at what has actually Work done for me: To what extent have I actually either profited or at least has it become an eye-opener, and is that what I now find myself with when I now live my ordinary life, is it still in that kind of a state where I feel that something ought be done about myself.

That is the question always comes up whenever I've lost desire of Work: Have I accomplished what I set out to do, am I at the present time more satisfied, or is it that the level of my Being has lowered so much that I have lost all interest in practically everything, including Work. It becomes very much a question of honesty. So that when this honesty comes to me—and sometimes I say it is a 'conscientious' way of looking at myself—that then in such moments, when I'm taken by ordinary life as it is and I have to do this and that and so forth and it tires me out and it keeps my energy flowing in a certain direction, that in order to remain truthful enough towards myself, I have to wait until such conditions are a little bit more conducive.

And then I want to be with myself at times, at such quiet moments that I'm not disturbed as much as usual, and then actually try to take stock of myself. And then, that can take a form of a conversation with yourself—"Here I am now, I'm doing this and that during the day, I earn my living, I have contact with such-and-such people, I see myself at the end of the day, how I have behaved in my work, in the relation with different people, what I have done, what kind of thoughts I had, what kind of feelings"—and I try to describe myself, how I have been during that day, as an ordinary performance of an ordinary person in an unconscious state. And then you ask, "What has happened to that what used to be there as what we want to call 'inner life,' of that what I really believe I am in reality instead of that what I appear to be to the outside world."

If I'm quiet and if I then can come to myself that way and have this conversation of asking myself, "What is it really now that I am, and what do I really wish" and I start to compare what I have done before, including then the influence of Work on me at a certain time and remembering, sometimes—maybe enthusiasm, or at least a very definite interest in it—in which there was something that you expected; and you have to be very honest then to see if that expectation has been fulfilled, or if there is, when you now consider it, a possibility of completely forgetting about Work. And then again, asking yourself the question, "What will I do now without Work, without these ideas."

Do as if I've never heard of them, or consider the period that I have been interested as if it

has not existed, and now I face my life in an, let's call it, an 'unconscious' state, but in any event fulfilling the requirements of ordinary life as well and as best as I can. The truthfulness of that kind of conclusion is that when you actually say "I've lost interest" and you mean it, you must then prove that you have lost it. Otherwise it's just a word. So, you can make up your mind—"I am here now, I've lost interest to the extent that I don't want to do anything anymore"—and then it's not only a conclusion that has been reached in your mind, but that it actually is something you feel, then you owe it to yourself to say, "I will not Work."

I would go through that period. Instead of remaining half-way and feeling a little sorry that you have lost interest, I would definitely say "I have no interest at the present time, and for me Work does not exist, and tomorrow morning, whenever I now happen to think about Work, I won't pay attention to it, because it is not for me." And, keep on saying it and live for one week, two weeks—I don't care how long—with that kind of an attitude: "I have tried to Work on myself. I have tried to understand Gurdjieff. I have tried, and I've read, and there were times I was affected, but at the present time I really do not care."

You see, I'm talking about what is a Man.

Fred: That's about where it is.

Mr. Nyland: Right. And I think with that I would simply say either it is 'not for me,' or that what I am is 'not sufficiently grown up' to be able to use it. And then you are in that state. Be very honest and simply say, "finished." It's far better, instead of being half way and wishy-washy. But then when you say it, you have a responsibility to keep on saying that, and to see to what extent actually you can exclude the ideas. Because as soon as, in that kind of a future, you start to think about it and you start even to remember that perhaps at times you want to use it, you're not entitled to it. You see, you have to be completely unconscious then, and completely 'asleep' in our terminology, and you have to want to continue to sleep. Because if you again, during that period, remember how it was when you used to Work a little bit and then start to apply a little of it, you're not honest.

You see the distinction I make. I'm a Man and as good as my word. When I say I've lost interest, that's it, and then I work at whatever has to be done during my daily life without even thinking about Gurdjieff or wanting to have any reference made to him. And then I want to see where I am in a month, two months or a year, ten years. I don't care, but as soon as there is something that comes in that still reflects that what you have experienced, then you're not honest

if you say “I have no interest.” The honesty is then, “My interest is still low, and with that I can have a wish to increase it.” Because it will not stay at that place. When it is at that place and it is only a little memory, it has no further meaning and it may mean just as well, “I have no interest at all.”

See, it’s a question of making up your mind. Either “Yes,” or “No.” Both are justified. I don’t think both are good, but both are correct from the standpoint of a Man. And if I start to think about it and I consider what that kind of a decision really means, then I have to say, “I will remain an unconscious Man. I will remain asleep. I will not do anything about building anything that I call a Soul. I will not really primarily consider that what I essentially wish to become.” Because then I will become dependent on outside conditions as they are, and I will have to take them as well as I can without any desire to become Conscious, without any desire really to have a Conscience that actually tells me what to do, and I will remain in my unconscious state, completely dependent on conditions as I find them—except when I have a certain maturity, that I know how to behave, and then I avoid, of course, danger or things of that kind, so that I avoid any kind of a thing in ordinary life that might even harm me.

Either one or the other. I think it is very useful to come to that kind of an accounting—what is debit, what is credit, and what is the balance. All right? Okay.

Mr. Nyland: Yeah, Bruce.

Bruce: You spoke recently on a tape about trying to struggle with certain feeling states, of not giving in so much to certain kind of feelings in order to save energy for Work. This is a tape at the end of the year, the last meeting before you left. I’ve been going through a phase the last few weeks of feeling moderately down most of the time, and I’ve seen occasions when I have given in to feelings that have drained me. I don’t know how to struggle directly with those kinds of a state. They’re not sharply defined.

Mr. Nyland: Are you physically all right?

Bruce: I think so. Yeah. There’s another element in this, which is that I went on a long fast for a period of time, about a month ago. I’ve been trying to clean my whole system out, in many ways.

Mr. Nyland: Has that been long enough that you have overcome the difficulties that were involved in it?

Bruce: I think so, but many people have told me they thought that my mood was related to that.

But I can't answer that for myself.

Mr. Nyland: Yeah, it's logical, of course, that it affects you, and I would not minimize it. Even a cut in your finger might prevent you from having feelings regarding Work.

Bruce: It does?

Mr. Nyland: [Chuckle] Why not. So it does affect the condition of the body. Physiological condition, state of health, equilibrium, and the physical sense—all of that affects you. Not that it has to when the wish is strong enough. When the wish is a little bit less, then of course the other becomes more important. If one is in that kind of a state, the logical thing first is to see that you become physically correct.

But let's assume that you are, and that's the ... whatever you have experienced has had its effect. Then the question is: I have a feeling, and I give in to feelings. That is, I allow my mind to have my feelings predominate. Because my mind has nothing to say any more about the possibility of stopping the feelings; not only that it has very little of that kind of a language, but the feelings are too strong, and perhaps they feel that they have been starved a little bit so perhaps they are entitled to it.

If I consider it wrong, I may consider it wrong for two reasons. One is that there is no relationship between my mind and my feelings, and this is a conflict that I can understand—that that is not right for the balance of myself. The second reason is that I see that there is too much energy flowing into the feelings to justify that expenditure. When I feel that I have given too much in one direction and that the other two centers are not properly taken care of, then my mind has a perfect right to say, "Stop sending that energy to the feelings and do something else," and then gives the solution. Because if the other two centers are neglected, they cannot play a part to counteract what the feeling center is doing, and that then my mind and my body almost get together and say, "Let's do something of our own in order to bring an equilibrium so that that what now flows to the feelings, at least that we are entitled to part of that energy for our own benefit." So my mind tells my body to become active. It says simply, "Go ahead and work," without saying anything to the feelings. But when my mind is strong enough to tell the body to do something and the body is willing enough to do it, you have established something that will require energy. And logically, since the energy is only in a certain quantity available, when part has to be used for the activity and for the relationship of the mind towards the body, there must be less energy going into the direction of the feelings. It's a very logical way: I find myself with

too much feeling and I give in to it, go and take a walk, or move furniture, or do anything that is physically possible—that is, if you are honest, that you feel it is too much, you see. The third way one looks at it is: “But, I wish to indulge myself.” I want my feelings to receive all that energy—I said a little while ago because I’ve ‘starved’ it and who knows, maybe you’re quite right—but then also my mind should say “I wish to have my feelings receive energy.”

Bruce: I’ve seen that indulgence. I’ve seen that tendency. I can’t see it Impartially, but...

Mr. Nyland: Go and indulge, but always let your mind *allow* you to indulge. The difficulty in the personality is usually that one of the centers predominates at the expense of the other two. But if I allow any one ... any center physically or emotionally to do whatever it says, what my mind says—“I allow it”—*that* is a different arrangement. When I say not my body walks but I walk and my mind says that, there is a balance already in myself, because I take an initiative with my mind.

When I consider the personality, I believe that that what is feeling will get me to certain places where my mind cannot get me at all; simply because the feeling is much more facile and much more, let’s call it almost in a ‘liquid’ or a ‘gaseous’ form, and can penetrate and can go without being contained within my skull. The thoughts are limited and my body is limited, but my feeling can go out from me if I wish it, and I can extend it even towards other people ... because I can feel for them and as it were ‘send,’ practically, this kind of energy to them.

So, I know this of my feeling and how it can drain me. If I wish to continue to let energy flow in that direction, I want my mind to become partner to it, because only then that my body will regain an equilibrium which, when one center starts to function predominantly, it will never be in equilibrium. So I say “I wish to feel.” that is all of me, now, wishes to feel. When I say to my body, “I wish this body to walk,” I take the initiative away from my body, it has nothing to say. The mind in a Man is always King, and too often he simply submits to that what his so-called ‘servant,’ as a body, wishes, and what the Queen, as a feeling, wants, and he is not a Man at all. When he is a Man, it becomes expressed in his mind that he says, “This I do. For this I take initiative. This I allow.” I can tell my body, “Eat. I want you to get fed. I want you to over-eat. I want my stomach to be so that it is filled that perhaps that I will get sick.” But if I wish it, I get sick.

You understand what I mean? It’s a different attitude. It is not allowing the feelings just to take energy. I simply say, “Okay, indulge,” but I allow you because I still am the master of that

what I now call my ‘personality’; totally; it’s not run by my feelings alone, it’s run by three centers, of which I, as King, am the most important at this time.

Bruce: When I allow my command from my mind ... that ... that kind of indulgence, do I make an effort to change the object of my...

Mr. Nyland: No. No. I would say ‘satisfy’ yourself until the feeling gets sick and tired of it. It’s the same with the stomach. But I allow it. It’s why I say it becomes a ‘positive’ attitude. And what I wish for a Man is to be positive. I don’t want him to be wishy-washy and be simply subject to all kind of feelings, all kind of states of the physical body. Someone has to be in charge, and sometimes it’s the feelings at the expense of the other two and sometimes, many times, it is my body—my mind has nothing to say about it, because I’m so damned weak.

That’s a very good example to see this: What is this body in the family of myself, and what is this mind. I call it ‘King’ and I call it ‘Queen.’ There are many ... you can call it ‘man’ and ‘woman’ if you like; you can call it ‘intellect’ and ‘emotion;’ it doesn’t matter what you call it—there is a very definite distinction between the two because they look at life from a little different standpoint and they consider the same thing differently. But when I want to have harmony in myself so that the King and the Queen can actually reign over and tell the populace, which is my body, what it ought to do and make laws for it so that the body is going to execute that what is the agreement between the mind and the feeling, that would be beautiful picture. And I say “I don’t reach it on Earth that easily” because my feeling and my mind are usually at odds and my poor body doesn’t know what to do, so most likely the body does what it wants to do without paying attention to my feelings, or even to my mind.

We are, in our unconscious state, very often dethroning the King and in that place we put the body, and the body is governing us with a little bit of feeling helping to furnish, you might say, a little ‘warmth’ to it. That is the state of an unconscious Man on Earth, and I call it ‘weak.’ Because he doesn’t even know why he exists. He doesn’t know what to do with his body or with his mind, than only fill it with a lot of extraneous nonsense which one gets out of a book without a possibility of applying it in his daily life. He only uses his mind in order to make a little money, but he never uses his mind for himself to grow.

He calls it ‘growth’ when he acquires knowledge, but I’m talking about the level of Being of a Man, not a Man who happens to have a little extra knowledge and perhaps is a little brilliant. He is a stupid fool. A Man has to be complete in all three centers, then when he is in balance he

can become a Man. But if he is wishy-washy or acts as if he is and he isn't, and that his feelings predominate as if the wife has the pants on and he just executes what the poor wife tells him to do, where is the man? And that, I think, is the picture of the personality. And Individuality is just the other way. There the King is King, and the body is servant. The King is Conscious. The Queen helps, because she is Conscience. She helps direct. She is, you might say, 'in charge' of the scale of weighing, and she helps the King actually to run correctly and keeps him straight. But then the Will is executed by the body, and the body does whatever the King and the Queen have agreed on. Because in a Conscious and a Conscientious state they agree, there is unity among them—between the two.

So go and indulge and watch it, and say, "Poor body, all this energy flowing in the energy of my feeling," and then what do I have to show for it. But this is really where the Man who becomes a little analytical and who really aspires to become a Man becomes interested in, "Where is the waste of my energies." You see, the head has definitely tendency to become something, but when he starts out—"Let's allow it first, and then see what happens"—he becomes positive regarding that what is happening, and the feeling very soon will know it. So, go ahead and take a walk.

About Work, who ... who Works, who in this Group? What have you done today. I'm not talking to the new people. I'm talking to those who are ... have been reading, who have thoughts about Consciousness, thoughts about 'I', thought about what to do, how to Wake Up, what is Awareness. What's your experience—today, for instance.

Fred Goodall: Is it all right if I say something about what...

Mr. Nyland: Yes, Fred. Go ahead.

Fred: Ah, this morning I spent, like, about ten, fifteen minutes trying to Observe myself when I could remember it—you know, like I lose it and try to bring it back—and this evening for about a half hour. And, you see, there is no depth to these things. It's a very spotty attempt; like, I'll walk and try to just become Aware of my body.

Mr. Nyland: Fred, you have to have perspective in this. It is not just doing a little bit of an exercise.

Fred: But that's the way that it winds up.

Mr. Nyland: You have to know why. Why do you really become interested.

Fred: I, I try to consider that, too.

Mr. Nyland: Okay, then think about that: What is your feeling about yourself; that even if you say, “I want to do an exercise for a certain purpose,” what is the purpose. The purpose is definitely to find yourself; to find a place, your place; to find a relationship between that what you are to the outside world and that what you are inside. You want to find out what is really in you essentially, a quality that you can rely on and that always will be there; that even if you don’t express it in any religious way, that you must admit that that what is within is worth more than that what are ordinary manifestations. And when I say, “I want to Wake Up,” for what? I have to ask myself, “Why do I really make that attempt,” because something is involved that I have to do and sometimes against the grain. I must know what I am after.

side 2 What I wish is to change, realizing what I am. And I can express that in many ways—of what I know I am—and sometimes I say I should be different and I am not and why in hell’s name can’t I be different when I say *that* I wish, and when I’m running up against the wall of that kind, then I say “What is the matter with me that I cannot find out what to do.”

Because I don’t believe you, that you have lost interest. I think it is just a little bit too superficial. The depth of one has to do with the emotional quality of where a Man tries to live, and in his life he has Inspiration and Aspiration. He has something that comes out at certain times when he is by himself and he considers himself and he sees his life as it has unrolled so far and whatever the past may be, and he still has ideas that the life that I now must lead is still ahead of me. How will I utilize the time, the energy, the gifts, the talents, whatever there is, for a certain purpose. What is my aim? What can I become as a Man? And I try to describe what is this that I call ‘ideal’ Man for me ... is the best way that I can describe of how it would be. I would like to be like so-and-so; I have read about so-and-so, and that was a Man who really became remarkable for me in my mind, can I now strive towards it?

What is the aspiration that kindles in me a desire to wish to continue to live in a certain way when I see what I am and I say, “This fool can do this and that, and why should it do this and that all the time.” Why should I be bitten by the same thing all over again. Why should I constantly have to find out that the stove is hot when there is a fire in it. Why don’t I know it before. Why do I fall constantly in traps that prevent me from even wanting to Work. What is the depth of my life now. Where is this central place that I would like to go to, and can I find out, when I leave this manifestation world for a little while and I come to myself inside, what is there actually in me now as an inspirational force that I would like to do. What can I make.

What can I create. What can I make of my life. What is there in my life that is worthwhile that I would like to retain, and what is there that I could throw away because I'm finished with it.

These are the questions. Then I sit quiet. And sometimes I want to sit so quiet perhaps I fall a little asleep, and perhaps in that I start to dream about the possibilities of myself, and I have belief in it because I know I'm strong enough—I have enough knowledge, I have enough feeling, I can do this I can do that, there are certain possibilities for me. What can I find in the outside world in which I can grow, and to what extent can I, at the end of the day, come to myself and considering myself and then, within my own world, live.

This kind of thing can be deepened within oneself without the aid of anyone else. And it doesn't matter where you are. And you sit in your house and you say, "Well, I build it. It is not finished yet, but it is a beginning. There is something there, and there was from me an ambition when I wanted to do it."

What is it in me that is an ambition now for myself, to build something that is not as yet in existence but I know ought to be right because it will be more pure and more harmonious. This aim has to be with any attempt I make. And I say if you want to leave religion out, it's all right. Talk about a higher level if you like, but if it's religion—that is, if there is something of that kind of feeling as if one wishes to build artistically something that can become a dwelling place for that what is higher than I am now—and I aspire towards it as if to say, "but I remember, and when I was young or when I was influenced by little stories of the Bible or so-and-so"—religious grandfather who had an aim in his life and who went to church all the time; or perhaps he confessed this and that and at least he was trying to be honest; or whatever his narrow-mindedness may have been I do not know—but I see the whole galaxy of that what has gone on this past generation in which now I find myself with all the different things that have made me what I am now, what can I do with this, now, in my life.

Then I become very quiet. Because then I start to consider what is the value of what I have, and what is this inspiration worth for me, and how will I start now tomorrow. What will I do when I wake up. What can be my first thoughts. A wish to grow, or a gratefulness to God that I have wakened up again? Another day to add to my life, or another day closer to my death—this is the determination I must come to: What is my life now valued at. Who would buy it. What is there that I can offer for sale. What have I accomplished so far, and what are still potentialities for myself. What is my real desire. That I want to continue to live? Otherwise,

why shouldn't I kill myself.

One must come to such conclusions. Every once in a while say "What is it for that I keep on breathing." Why should I even want to earn money in order to buy some bread so that I won't starve to death. Let me be what it is; if that's the case, I may as well be like an animal and go somewhere in the woods and lie down and die.

But I'm a Man, Fred. I'm a Man with an aim. I have an idea of something that I ought to be; perhaps not what I am now, but I must believe that I could become something that could be called, really, and that Man can depend on and that I can depend on, and that I know must be there when it is within me at any one time that I wish it I can talk to it and say, "Help me God." To live so that I can actually perform or to do and not be bothered by all the doubts and the different things that now seem to assail me in some way or other. Why should I have them. I am alive, I breathe, I take in a breath and I say "God, thanks; I am alive," and I breathe out and I say "God, thanks; I am on this Earth."

These are the things when it starts to stir within one's inner life and there is something else, and I don't care anymore what kind of a coat I wear, and I don't care if I have to shave, and I don't care how dirty I may be, and I don't care even if I haven't slept very much. But there is something in me that says, "I will try, I will know, I will do, I can because I wish." Then you do your exercise, or whatever it is, quite differently because you expect something. It is not just an ordinary little bit of a thing of saying trying to become Aware and so forth. I say, "No, by God, I have an aim. I wish to become a Man, and this is one of the ways by which I hope that I can." Because if I don't do it this way, I'll have to do it some other way. I still want to be a Man, and if it is on this Earth—still on this Earth—I will be a Man, but if there is a possibility that during this time that I Work for being a Man on Earth I could build something that perhaps will not be destroyed when I die physically, then maybe that might be a motivation for the continuation of my life.

And if I can put all these kind of things in perspective ... and I see one thing after another, and the further I penetrate into that the more I see and the more I know that I don't know, and all that goes with me in my innocence and ignorance as a little bit of knowledge and very definitely a feeling that I want to continue. "Here I am, and I want to live now," *that* is my prayer at such a time. But one doesn't talk about it too much because it is your own. That's your private life. That is how you talk to God, and that's how God can talk to you then. Because you're open, and

you can say, “Let it be, and let that what You are, God, flow into me, that I become what I should be as a Man. If I am created in the image of God, then show me that there is a possibility for me to become that.”

All right?

Fred Goodall: I’ll try it, I’ll try...

Mr. Nyland: Good. Yes, Bill.

Bill Clift: I gave myself a task two weeks ago to write people that I’m close to—four people—because I wanted to try to make something alive in me emotionally that could help me to Work. I completed only half of the task. I wrote two people.

Mr. Nyland: What happened to the other two?

Bill: My days got involved and I just stopped it, you know...

Mr. Nyland: So, they are deprived.

Bill: Right. For about a week I didn’t get very into myself.

Mr. Nyland: Now you have to write four others. You have to make your task stronger. When you fail, you have to be serious enough to say “I failed.” Either I made a task that I couldn’t fulfill ... but in this particular case I know it wasn’t that; it was simply that I didn’t do it...

Bill: Right.

Mr. Nyland: ...and that the original impetus was a little bit less after I finished two letters.

Maybe my appetite was a little bit too much. As far as I’m concerned, come hell or high water I write four letters. But, now I haven’t done it. Now it’s two still to go ... I make two more because I wish this task for myself...

Bill: To be complete.

Mr. Nyland: Yes. And it is something, that when you say, “I want to write that kind of a letter to so-and-so,” partly because of your own emotional state and partly because you want to communicate something to the others; already that kind of a thought will most likely have affected the people you want to write to ... and you put yourself under an additional obligation as soon as you have the kind of a thought which might be useful to someone else: That unless you really fulfill it... You have affected a person ... and one becomes extremely sensitive, sometimes, that you have affected the other person already with your thought or your feeling that you wished to do, and then don’t do it and it might be a disappointment. So there are two things involved: One is your own character; the other is the influence on others, and for that you have to pay

extra.

The idea of writing is good. The idea for yourself is right.

Huh?

Bill: I wondered if that...

Mr. Nyland: Oh, it's quite right. Quite right. I would almost say anything that I feel that will help my personality either to become more flexible, more open, more willing to say certain things which usually I don't; they belong to a certain form of a habitual behavior which of course is common to me, that belongs to my personality and the way it is expressed, and whenever I break that kind of a sequence, or that what I am and I do a little different, immediately something takes place in me which, as a result of that kind of a wish or the thought which is connected with it, produces a different kind of a chemical within myself. I change at the moment when I make a promise to myself; and that one doesn't understand usually, yet physiologically something takes place which helps me psychologically.

And that therefore when I say, "Here is a task and I think it is within my means that I want to fulfill it," now when I do it I must have in mind constantly the reason why I want to do it. I say "Yes" to become emotionally more involved or to become more flexible, but for what purpose—again—do I want to do that.

Bill: I wanted somehow, after I had done that, to wish to Work more and to Work.

Mr. Nyland: There are two reasons. One is a direct reason in this world, on this Earth, of in order to be able to live more in communication with each other and perhaps to experiment, or to experience certain conditions which are a little unusual. They make me, as I say, more 'flexible' and more 'adaptable' to conditions. That's one reason. The other reason, that is when I constantly can be reminded that I have a task, that the task is for me ... at any one time that I happen to think about the task and fulfilling it, that a purpose is always involved in trying to Wake Up as often as I can in doing the task. So that the fulfillment of the task is not to fulfill the task, but the association of the task which I put on myself *always* must be the reason that it will give me an opportunity to be much more Aware or, if I possibly can, to be Awake, or to be reminded, or to make an effort, or, after it is finished that I then, having fulfilled it I am then in a different state.

Whenever I fulfill a task and it is right and I have ... perhaps self-imposed, when it is fulfilled I have more self-reliance. And this is a condition that will help me: When I say "Now I

wish to Work,” I can Work more because I have more self-reliance. So, you see, in that sense it will help. Always remember, a task is always connected with trying to make an effort to Wake Up. If that doesn’t fit, then the task is just as well you can push it this way, you can push it that way, it doesn’t make any difference whatsoever; for ordinary life it always makes a difference, but as far as I am concerned for my growth it doesn’t make any difference if the flower turns towards me or turns towards the wall.

Bill: I made it partially also, that during the day I would think I was the person that I was going to write and to consider now, and to connect that up with Work. Now, when the days actually came and I sensed ... I heard the person’s name in my cranium, I didn’t do it. I didn’t have the wish at that time.

Mr. Nyland: This, of course, is an indication of how we are.

Bill: Right.

Mr. Nyland: We have so many windows that open up to the different parts of the world that sometimes only one or two windows are open and the rest is closed. I’m not at all, myself, at any one time always the same ... and whatever I now happen to think, after I’ve eaten a good meal I don’t think about it anymore. Whatever it is. If I say “It is raining now”: I cannot think too much about the sunshine in order that I would like the rain to go away; but when the sunshine is there I don’t think of the rain, so of course I’m not only not flexible, I’m completely ignorant.

No, really! Because I forget when I am concentrating on one particular thing. That is the limit of my consciousness. If I could understand that my consciousness as a whole ought to be able to contain, any moment, any kind of a thought that ever was in there ... I mean, this is a very interesting kind of a picture to take: That if I’m at the present time dependent on the time dimension that flows through me as a certain time length, that if I at any one time could really, at one point in such time could remember that that point is related to all points which are being lived at the present time by everybody, and that together with that ... this would be a second dimension. And together with that, that that point which I now represent at this time in my own time length duration, that it belongs historically to that what I have gone through and what in the future is still in store for me, that would be the third dimension. It simply means that a Conscious Man ought to be able to think anything at any time, wherever he happens to be, at any place in his brain. That would be homogeneity. So, it’s a marvelous aim. It’s so far off that you

can't see it.

Yeah.

New Question: Um, I noticed that sometimes when I tried to, you know, attempt just to be Aware of myself; you know, I'm unable to tell whether it's my ... whether what I'm thinking or I'm feeling. In other words, I can't...

Mr. Nyland: Yeah. I think that is you.

Questioner: ...at all.

Mr. Nyland: No, I think the difficulty is that when I think and I don't know if I'm thinking or if it is an Awareness, I'm quite sure it is a thought only. I think Awareness is something that is quite different from thinking, and if I experience an Awareness I will know it. It's only that it doesn't seem to happen as yet, partly because maybe you don't know, partly you don't approach it in the right way, partly because you think a little bit too much about it and it has no chance to go over into an Awareness.

You understand what is meant by an Awareness? It's the introduction of the Impartiality into the thought. Because my thought at the present time is mixed with that what I also feel. Or, if it is mixed with associations with the rest of the brain, the thought itself is impure. So when I want to have an experience of an Awareness which is the result of a mental functioning which is completely pure, it has to be 'cleaned,' as it were, of the extraneous influences from my feeling or from the rest of my brain. We simply say that the difference between that what I call 'alertness' or 'aliveness' and that what is Awareness is the difference between a thought and a mental function I call an 'Awareness' in my brain, but that the characteristic is, that that what is an Awareness is actually the mind functioning purely for the receiving of facts as they are.

So that when I say I wish to Work or I want to see what it is to be Aware, I of course become first alert to that what I am, and I distinguish between my brain and now the manifestations of my body as they are. But as I now become—or wish to become—Aware of that, that what is received as an image of my body has to be received purely as it is. That means that that what is received in my brain as an impression of what my body is, in my brain must be accepted as that what my body is without any description or without any liking it; simply as it is, and therefore I will know the difference between an Awareness and a thought whenever there is Impartiality.

Questioner: Well, like even ... even now, you know, I'm struggling to listen...

Mr. Nyland: I know.

Questioner: ...thoughts keep piling in and I drive them out, and I can't.

Mr. Nyland: And at the present time it would be quite impossible to be Aware, but what you should do is, when you're all by yourself you don't have to listen to anyone, and you just happen to sit, and you get up and you walk, that then you try, at that time, to see if anything could be there, present to you which could Observe you. That is the process. I sit, and I get up. As I walk, almost I would say 'aimlessly,' from one wall to the other in my room and I turn around, I can say to myself, "This body is walking." Something in me can then say, "That what is in me is Aware of this body walking." And it is as if that Awareness then has no interest in me at all; only in the fact that it happens to exist, and 'It'—my body—it walks.

Try it in simple moments first. Very simple surroundings. All by yourself. Don't try it in the beginning at any other time. If you really sit and you close your eyes and move your hand, your arm, see if there is an Awareness possible which has no interest in a description of what you're doing, but only is interested in the fact that you or your arm, or your hand, or your finger, happens to exist. You understand what I mean?

Yeah.

Vida Clift: Mr. Nyland, very recently I was going to take a task for myself, to ask a certain person a question, and I knew from the beginning that this question would evoke a response that would be probably angry. And...

Mr. Nyland: Would make you angry?

Vida: No, it would make this person angry.

Mr. Nyland: Yeah.

Vida: And I wanted to Observe myself trying to ask this, and I couldn't do it. I was too afraid of the reaction, and I was very dissatisfied with myself...

Mr. Nyland: No. That's right. No, no. It's simply something you cannot do. Why would you be dissatisfied.

Vida: Because I'd like to...

Mr. Nyland: Yeah. That's right: You would like to. But there is absolutely no reason why you can.

Vida: But it seemed to me for a moment that if I would just push myself...

Mr. Nyland: Sure. It seems all the time that you ought to be able. If you can lift a hundred

pounds, you can say “I can lift a hundred pounds.” If you can do two hundred pounds, maybe you can do that also. Maybe three hundred, you’re quite sure you cannot do. But in between—you say “Two hundred, perhaps but maybe not, maybe one seventy-five”—you find out you cannot do it and the limit is a hundred and fifty, why would you assume that you ought to be able to lift two hundred. You’re quite convinced for yourself that it is impossible, and you have no further anxiety about it because you know your limitations.

Vida: But, in the past there have been certain times when, if I have tried hard enough, I have been able to do something...

Mr. Nyland: Yeah. The question is: Were you actually Awake, or was it a forcing of yourself. There is a difference. You see, I can say I want to be Awake while I now don’t say things that are on the tip of my tongue, and I know that in the past I have been able to shut up when I felt like telling a person off. So, whatever the experience may have been in the past, may not have been connected with being Awake.

If it’s a question that I actually was Awake and I remember that, then I say I want to do it again because I know I’ve had that experience, it is possible for me. Then I start to describe what the state would be if I were Awake, and then I dilute it; because I describe the state of being Awake in a certain way, whereas the desire for Waking Up is only to be Awake. I cannot describe what it will be until I get there, and when I am Awake, then I will know.

You understand that? As soon as there is something that I try to describe of what I would like, then I go in the direction of prescribing a certain state about which I don’t know anything at all. If you put it in a different way: If you pray to God to not to let it rain, you tell God it’s better for you if it doesn’t rain and God may think it’s much better for you that it does rain.

You have no means of knowing what is, in a state of Awakening, good for you, or even describing what is your state as you are Awake, than only that it is different from being asleep. And that the wish to Wake Up goes only as far as the wish to be Awake, and no description of what you would like. One makes an attempt, and then you see what can happen then. You make an attempt to be Awake, and you wish to stay Awake for two or three seconds or minutes, you find out you cannot do it. You get frustrated. The conclusion is: You cannot do it, and that is the acceptance of myself. But I also know that if I cannot do it now and I will continue to try to do it, I may be able to make inroads on my sleeping state.

And this is the way one Works. One starts to Wake Up and one has an experience, and it is

in that experience, I say, the most beautiful things—“and the sky was blue and everything was just lovely, it was a very desirable state to be in”—so the next time I say I would like to be Awake because I would like to see the blue sky because I said it was lovely because of this, and all of that dilutes my effort. It only extends ... I am asleep and I say “Wake up,” I’ve compared it every once in a while, when I wake up physically in the morning there is a moment in which I’m not as yet thinking or feeling about the day at all. I just open my eyelids and I say I’m ‘awake’ because my eyes start to function. And I hear noises and the different sense organs are active, after that one moment my mind and my feelings will start working, but the moment in which I open my eyelids, when I see and I come to the realization I am awake, I’m completely free. It doesn’t last very long.

This is what I mean when the awakening ... psychologically I am in a sleeping state, I don’t like to be asleep now. I have a dream, in my waking-sleeping state, of what is meant by being Awake. I cannot describe in my dream because I have no control in my dream of what will happen in the dream—it just happens—but I do know that in that dream I wish to be Awake; and then I Wake Up, and that moment of Awakening gives me the realization that I am asleep.

All right?

Vida: Thank you.

Mr. Nyland: Okay.

Who has read anything about Gurdjieff? Come on. Who. Yeah. That’s it. How many? And who hasn’t? Now, of course I would say it’s a lack of your education. Who wants to know more about Gurdjieff? Who wants to Work? Who knows how to Work? Now, that is surprising isn’t it? Huh? Those who now know about Work, who have heard about it, who at times have made attempts—okay, these people write now up what they understand by Work. That’s a task. As you write it, try to remember those people who don’t know anything about it. And don’t make it too long, but try to tell in your own words what you think Work is, or what your impression has been at the time that you became acquainted with it. If you wish to add the reason why you have made attempts, you can do that.

What is needed for a person is a clarification for himself why he is doing what he is doing, and really at times quite definitely must make into account how he has spent his energies. Because a Man is a Man. He is accountable. A Man has to become responsible if he isn’t. There is always a certain period, or a point sometimes quite sharply defined, in which a Man

takes a responsibility for his life. Before that it didn't matter very much because it was just happy-go-lucky, but there is a certain period in which one says, "From now on I will take care of myself," and I will stand on my own feet. And you can be grateful for whatever you have received and you can say to your father and mother "Thank you very much," but from now on I take care.

In the same way, this question of Work on yourself has to be decided by you, and at many times you have to come again and again to the conclusion that it has a value. And you realize what the value is when you try to write down what you actually have experienced and what you think it is worth, or that when you write it that again you renew the contract of yourself with your Work and you say, "It's good for another year."

What one has to fight in life most, is laziness and lethargy. Lack of interest. You are interested in the things that give you something, and you don't want to do the things that are a little difficult. You want to follow the line of least resistance, and whatever your inclinations are, you will want to do that at the expense of the responsibilities which are on you and which you don't like any more. This is really important—to see why you are lazy. It's because you don't want to face the different things that would cost you something, and if you followed the line of least resistance you will remain an animal because you are not using your brain at all, than just by being a little bit clever.

If one wants to have the name of Man, one faces conditions and does certain things against the grain. If you don't want to do that you remain wishy-washy, and sometimes I've said you're 'much worse' than an animal. Because an animal will take care of whatever there is of that animal and take care as well as it can, and when it has to go out and hunt for food, it will. Because an animal doesn't want to die either. It has something that 'aspires'—even, if you wish to call it that way—to become a Man ... but a Man has a different kind of quality; because he has such a brain that it is possible for him to see what might be possible, and that kind of an aim for him can help him to overcome difficulties and face situations which he doesn't like but apparently have been put on him, partly imposed and partly self-willed. And one has no character if one denies that kind of responsibility. One simply avoids them. Ultimately they will have to be faced, either in this life or in some other life. Fortunately, you don't think about another life when you are in that kind of a condition, because you will think that it is finished anyhow when you die. I'm afraid you won't, and you will find out later, and in any event the

question is: You face it now, so now is the answer that is required, not tomorrow.

This is the sign of a person who wishes to grow up. It is a question of one's character—to what extent that you dare to take that responsibility and let go sometimes the ordinary kind of wishes which are in the way. Because you must have an aim. If one wishes to live, your aim must be that you would become that what you are not now, and then to use all the difficulties that are in the way for that particular purpose, even if it costs you something—like an indulgence, or like over-eating, or that what is so nice and lovely when you're in bed and don't have to get up as yet. It's not necessary to become spartanic and to go out at five o'clock in the morning and wash your face with the water from the pump when the temperature is below freezing. We are not that kind of people. We are spoiled in this civilization, but within ourselves it's a different question.

So when I suggest that you write up what you know a little bit about Work, it's for your own good to find out how little you know, really, and how little attention you have paid to it. And how often when you do come to a meeting even that you don't know why you come, but you happen to come because that sometimes is the easiest way out: Just to come without asking any questions.

I am here tomorrow night. I hope to come a little oftener to Boston. I think there should be much more aliveness. I've said it several times... But you cannot get it unless you get new people. And when you get new people, you must know what you're talking about. And when you don't dare to hold up your hand because you don't know what Work is, you ought to be ashamed of yourself. Because there have been hundreds of opportunities for you to know it and you have listened to enough tapes, I've been here often enough, you have associated with each other for quite some time, you ought to know for sure by this time what is meant by an Observation process—or an intuition, or a realization of the existence of something that perhaps at the present time you haven't made but could be made. What is the meaning of an 'I'. Where is the place of God in your life. Whatever it is, what is alive in you. That, after all, is what counts.

But you must not come here, just sit and listen a little bit, partly out of curiosity, and then come again when I happen to be here and for the rest of the time you don't pay any attention to anything because you're so busy. Such foolishness and such nonsense. It's far better you don't come. But when you do come, you have an obligation. Because when you listen to me you have

that obligation, like it or not, because I put it on you, on your life, simply because of the fact that you happen to be here and you hear what I'm saying. And I'm telling you, you have that obligation *now*. There's nothing that will change that, and no particular atonement and no excuses for God which are not acceptable by Him. You have to face your life the way it is, and you have to make the best of it. You have to see what you can do with it, because if you don't you die like a dog, and you know it.

We'll meet again tomorrow with a few of you who belong to a little bit of a, let's call it, 'inner' Group, or at least a little bit more intimate circle. Group I—I want to talk to all of them, to see what is there alive. I want to know why there isn't enough life. Why there are difficulties. Why you cannot as yet agree on certain principles of Work; so that it can be clearly defined; so that when I ask such a question and there are people in Group I in this here tonight, that immediately your arm should shoot up and you say, "I know." Why should there be that kind of a difficulty.

You understand me. I don't come here to waste my time. I have a very definite task, and I will adhere to that. And when you want to come you can listen, but then you must do. Otherwise, I don't wish you.

Good night.

End of tape